AIR POUCH
PRIORITY

UNCLASSIFIED

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

714.00(W)/11-2753
F790004-1174

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, GUATEMALA — 455 DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON. — November 27, 1953 DATE

REF :

	ACTION	DEPT.
For Dept. Use Only	OLI-10	IN DC/R-2 T-3 IPS-1 IPS-2 ARA-2 UNA-4 MC-1
	RECD 8:30	OTHER ARMY-35 NAVY-39 AIR-24 CIA-10 OSD-2 OCB-1

SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 48 for State, Army and Air Departments from SA - Section I

Action Taken 12-2-53

This Document Must Be Returned to DC/R Central Files

ECLASSIFICATION DATE — PER COORDINATOR, OFFICE ARA — FADRC FOI CASE NO. 74,382

SUMMARY

As an interlude of relative calm returned to the Guatemalan scene this week, little public attention was paid to the potentially most significant event in recent months: that José Manuel FORTUNY, Secretary General of the Guatemalan Communist party, the PGT, and Dionisio ENCINA, Secretary General of the Mexican Communist party, have been visiting the Soviet Union at the same time as Víctor Manuel GUTIERREZ, Communist Secretary General of the national labor federation, CGTG, and Leonardo CASTILLO Flores, Secretary General of the national farm workers' federation, CNCG.

The off-year municipal elections resulted in a close victory for the anti-Communists in their Guatemala City stronghold, while the Communist PGT, running for the first time as an independent party, elected a mayor in Escuintla and made a strong showing in other selected provincial towns.

The four Administration parties and the Communist-controlled and influenced labor and "mass" organizations issued a strong protest against the U.S. proposal to discuss Communist intervention at the 1954 Caracas Conference, but this and other leftist propaganda on the subject stopped short of an explicit demand that Guatemala not attend. A ranking military officer was quoted as having said that Guatemala's decision concerning the continuance of the U.S. Military Missions would be postponed until after the Conference.

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

Municipal Elections Show Rising Communist Strength: According to unofficial returns, the country-wide municipal elections on November 20-22 resulted in the election of the Communist PGT's candidates for mayor in the provincial towns of Escuintla, Villa Nueva, and San Lucía Cotzumalguapa, all on the Pacific watershed.

JCHill:cg — REPORTER

714.00(W)/11-2753

FILED

LWC

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

F790004-1175

UNCLASSIFIED

It was the first time the PGT had run as an independent party and it made an impressive showing: Gabriel CAMEY, a farm union leader currently also in the Soviet Union, won in a four-way race in Escuintla in which all Administration parties as well as the Opposition were represented; the party piled up over 4000 votes in the six provincial towns in which it ran independently; and pro-government candidates publicly bearing PGT endorsement in addition to that of one or more of the other parties, won the elections in other towns. The Administration parties as a group won in an overwhelming number of the 310 municipalities involved, but by running candidates against each other revealed that the unity of the Administration forces is still not a reality outside of the capital.

The "Anti-Communist Electoral Front" won a close contest, 3875-3814, in its traditional stronghold of Guatemala City where only the replacement of a part of the Municipal Council was involved. The voting brought out only about 10% of the registered electors and no significant test of sentiment will arise in the capital until the fall of 1954 when a mayor and seven deputies are to be elected.

INTERNATIONAL

Leftists Agitate Against Discussion of Communism at Caracas: Continuing the leftist campaign against adoption of the U.S. proposal to discuss Communist intervention in hemispheric affairs at the Caracas Conference (Weeka 47), the four Administration parties together with the country's principal labor and "mass" organizations issued a joint declaration on November 25 stating that "the accusations that Guatemala is a 'Communist bridgehead' and a 'threat to hemispheric security' are false and have no other end than to make Guatemala appear as a dangerous enemy of the United States at a time when there are circles interested in unleashing a new war. The vast press campaign inside and out of the country, then, has the aim of preparing the American peoples for the carrying out of an open intervention in our internal affairs." The statement was signed by the political parties PAR, PRG, RN and PGT (Communist); the national labor federation, CGTG, and the national campesino federation, CNCG; the Communist-front women's organization, AFG, youth organization, JDG, students' organization, FUD, and young writers' and artists' group, Saker-Ti; and two Communist-line tenants' organizations. It was the first collective action of the groups with which the Communist PGT hopes to create a strengthened "National Democratic Front."

The leftist and Communist press likewise continued to inveigh against the U.S. proposal, but the line thus far has been to protest "intervention" while refraining from any demand that Guatemala stay away from the Caracas Conference. The government has made no further announcement about its plans with respect to the Conference.

Dep. No. 499
From: Guatemala

UNCLASSIFIED
(Classification)

Ind. To:
Dep. No.
From:

MILITARY 1790004-1176

High Ranking Officer States Discussion on U.S. Missions to be Postponed Until After Caracas Conference. A senior officer in the Guatemalan Armed Forces indicated to a U.S. officer a week ago that he felt quite sure that Guatemala would not submit the request for the renewal of the contracts of the U.S. Army and Air Missions until after the Caracas Conference. While this reflected the Guatemalan military's anxiety about their international isolation and irritation at failure to obtain U.S. cooperation (Weeka 47), the Military Missions are actually continuing their work on the basis of the lapsed contracts with no difficulties.

U.S. Stoppage of Ammunition Shipments for Guatemala Virtually Ignored: After a single back page news story in El Espectador of November 21 that the U.S. Customs had stopped the trans-shipment to Guatemala of 25,000 rounds of 20 mm. anti-aircraft ammunition ordered by Mr. Hubert I. JULIAN in Italy, the local press dropped the subject and the case drew no public interest. Guatemalan officers have not mentioned the case in conversations with the Embassy's Service Attachés.

Guatemalan Ratification of Rio Pact Reported Under Consideration: Colonel Enrique PERALTA, Guatemalan Military Attaché in Washington, upon his return to the United States on November 24, indicated that the Guatemalan Foreign Office was studying the possibility of removing the Belize reservation to Guatemala's ratification of the Rio Pact as a means of procuring U.S. Arms and equipment. Although he expressed his optimism that the reservation would be withdrawn, he emphasized that it would take some time before the decision could be reached.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

William D. Krieg
Counselor of Embassy

Contributor:
Col. A. E. McCormick, Army Attaché

cc: C.A. Missions & Routine

UNCLASSIFIED